



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

FEB 16 2017

Memorandum

To: Regional Directors

Through: Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection *R. Shan*

From: Acting Associate Director, Workforce and Inclusion *D. H. H.*

Subject: Federal Employees Health Benefits Coverage for Casual Employees

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently issued a final regulation to extend eligibility for health insurance coverage with a full government contribution under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program to temporary firefighters and fire protection personnel, including casual employees hired under the Administratively Determined Pay Plan for Emergency Workers.

On November 14, 2012, OPM issued an interim final regulation (77 CFR 67743) to allow agencies to request FEHB coverage for intermittent employees engaged in emergency response and recovery work as defined by the Stafford Act. Since 2013, the National Park Service has been offering FEHB coverage to seasonal firefighters and employees who hold a fire qualification or support fire regardless of appointment duration.

In issuing the final regulation, OPM concluded that its current policy of categorically excluding intermittent employees from FEHB coverage should be changed, especially in light of the need for agencies to attract and quickly hire emergency workers in recognition of hazardous conditions. On November 21, 2016, OPM issued a final rule to amend the FEHB Program regulations to expand coverage to certain temporary, seasonal, and intermittent employees who are expected to work at least 130 hours per calendar month for at least 90 consecutive days. OPM reserves the authority to limit FEHB coverage for intermittent employees only when they are in a pay status.

Over the past year, OPM and the Interior Business Center worked closely with the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of Interior to ensure casual employees are offered the opportunity to enroll in the FEHB Program under the Affordable Care Act. Effective January 1, 2017, casual employees will be given the option of enrolling in the FEHB program once eligibility requirements are met.

The attached documents explain procedures and forms for casual employees who elect to enroll in the FEHB Program. If you have questions, please contact Christine Peters, National Incident Business Lead, at (208) 407-6558 or christine_peters@nps.gov.

Attachments

cc: Associate Regional Directors
Chief, Fire and Aviation
Chief, Human Resources
Regional Fire Management Officers
Deputy Chief, Law Enforcement, Security, and Emergency Services